

In re Patent Application of  
Zacco  
Serial No. 10/657,327  
Filed September 8, 2003

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**In the Claims**

Applicant affirms the election of Group I claims, namely claims 9-12 and 17-18; non-elected claims are hereby withdrawn.

Please substitute the claims as set forth below in a complete listing. The claim amendments made introduce no new matter and are fully supported in the application as filed.

1-8.(canceled)

9.(currently amended) A mouthpiece for use by a person during sleep to aid in reducing snoring, said mouthpiece comprising:

a mouthpiece body of a thermoplastic material having a shape generally complementary to the person's dental arch, including a posterior end having two spaced apart members positioned toward the back of the person's dental arch when properly worn, and an anterior end having an airway opening therethrough, the anterior end positioned when properly worn to support the person's lips spaced apart so that air flows through the airway opening; and

a substantially rigid, protective mold of a thermostable material, said protective mold forming a portion of said mouthpiece body so that the mold protects at least a periphery of the mouthpiece body from imprinting by teeth.

10.(original) The mouthpiece of claim 9, wherein said mouthpiece body and said mold comprise a single non-separable piece.

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11.(original) The mouthpiece of claim 9, further comprising a removable plug inserted in the airway opening and protruding therefrom.

12.(original) The mouthpiece of Claim 9, wherein said mouthpiece body has a lower surface and an upper surface spaced apart therefrom at an angle which increases from the posterior end to the anterior end of said body.

13.(withdrawn) A mouthpiece for use by a person during sleep to aid in reducing snoring, said mouthpiece comprising:

a mouthpiece body of a thermoplastic material having a shape generally complementary to the person's dental arch, including a posterior end having two spaced apart members positioned toward the back of the person's dental arch when properly worn, and an anterior end, the anterior end positioned when properly worn to support the person's lips spaced apart so that air flows through the airway opening;

an airway comprising a hollow member projecting outwardly from said anterior end, said hollow member having an airway opening therethrough; and

a substantially rigid, protective mold of a thermostable material, said protective mold forming a portion of said mouthpiece body so that the mold protects at least a periphery of the mouthpiece body.

14.(withdrawn) The mouthpiece of claim 13, wherein said mouthpiece body and said mold comprise a single non-separable piece.

15.(withdrawn) The mouthpiece of claim 13, further comprising a removable plug inserted in the airway opening and protruding therefrom.

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16.(withdrawn) The mouthpiece of Claim 13, wherein said mouthpiece body has a lower surface and an upper surface spaced apart therefrom at an angle which increases from the posterior end to the anterior end of said body.

17.(original) A method of reducing snoring during sleep, the method comprising:

heating a mouthpiece body of a thermoplastic material having a shape generally complementary to the person's dental arch, including a posterior end having two spaced apart members positioned toward the back of the person's dental arch when properly worn, and an anterior end having an opening therethrough, the anterior end positioned when properly worn to support the person's lips spaced apart so that air flows through the opening, and having a substantially rigid protective mold of a thermostable material, said protective mold forming a portion of said mouthpiece body so that the mold protects at least a periphery of the mouthpiece body, wherein heating continues until the thermoplastic material has softened;

inserting the mouthpiece into the mouth of a person so that the mouthpiece is substantially aligned with the person's dental arch;

imprinting the person's teeth along a surface of the mouthpiece body not protected by the mold by biting down on the mouthpiece;

allowing the mouthpiece to cool so as to reduce its plasticity; and

wearing the mouthpiece body in the person's mouth during sleep, wherein the mouthpiece body is substantially aligned with the person's dental arch and held between the teeth so that the person's lips are supported by the anterior end of the mouthpiece body to allow the person to breathe through the opening in the anterior end of the mouthpiece body.

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18.(original) A method for a person to reduce snoring during sleep, the method comprising breathing at least partially through the mouth during sleep by positioning in the mouth of the person a mouthpiece having a body of a thermoplastic material shaped generally complementary to the person's dental arch, the mouthpiece body including an anterior end having an airway opening therethrough, the anterior end of the mouthpiece body being sufficient to support the person's lips spaced apart so that air flows through the airway opening during breathing , and the mouthpiece body further having a substantially rigid protective mold of a thermostable material forming a portion of the mouthpiece body so that the mold protects at least a periphery of the mouthpiece body, wherein an outer surface of the body of the mouthpiece not protected by the mold bears an imprint of the person's adjacent dental arch to therein engage the person's teeth.